

City of Alexandria

New Curbside Recycling Cart Collection Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why is the City changing recycling containers?

After careful research, study and customer requests, City staff has selected a blue, wheeled cart as the new standard for collecting recyclables at most City households.

The new recycling carts:

- Increase capacity - allowing more room to accommodate more materials that can be recycled all together.
 - New materials collected include: mixed paper, newspaper, plastics #1-7, rigid plastics, coat hangers, aluminum bottles and cans, glass, aluminum foil and trays, plastic - bags in a bag, empty aerosol cans, books, cardboard, gable top juice and milk containers, and paperboard
- Easier to roll to the curb – the old bins were clumsy and difficult to carry.
- Increase safety of residents and collection staff – the new cart has wheels and can be emptied semi-automatically, which protects both residents and collection staff.
- Improve community cleanliness- lids on containers minimize spillage, material blown by winds, and keeps the material dry.
- Increase recycling rate and reduce disposal costs – one ton of trash costs the City \$78 to dispose, while one ton of recycling earns the City approximately \$30.

What will the new recycling containers look like?

- Recycling container sizes include 18, 35, and 64 gallon containers. The 18 gallon bin will not have a lid or wheels.
- All new containers are blue, the industry standard color for recycling.

What size recycling container will I receive?

Carts will be assigned by housing type based on City housing classifications (i.e. Detached, Semi-Detached, Row, etc). For example:

- Detached houses and duplexes will receive a 64 gallon container
- Row and townhouses will receive either an 18 gallon or a 35 gallon container depending on space constraints.

Who will receive a new recycling container?

All curbside residential recycling customers will receive a new container.

When will I receive my new container?

Delivery of containers will begin November 1, 2010 and will take several weeks to complete.

Where will the new recycling container be delivered?

New recycling containers will be delivered to the curb in front of your house.

What should I do if I receive the wrong size container?

If you receive a container that is too large for your space constraints or you would like a larger container, there will be an opportunity to request a size exchange starting December 1, after all containers have been delivered. Please use or store the new container until the exchange period.

Where do I set out my new recycling container for weekly pickup?

In most areas, recycling containers must be set out at the curb. Alley collection may be available, depending on space constraints of the alley. Upon request, the Solid Waste Division will inspect an alley for compliance necessary for recycling collection in an alley. Inspections will assess alley width, height clearance, vegetation/over-growth; and alley entrance/exit.

I have to store my container in the front of my property. How can I camouflage it?

Many residents have found unique and convenient ways to store their trash and recycling containers, while camouflaging the containers from the street view. Options for various container sizes include:

- Planting a bush
- Erecting a screen or lattice
- Building/buying a bench large enough to store a bin under while providing seating
- Store containers under stairs or stoops

What is a RFID tag and why is it the industry standard to include such technology in recycling containers?

The new containers will include a Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) tag, comparable to a barcode that can be read by the collection truck once placed within 12 inches of the truck.

The Solid Waste Division does not track customers by individual name or property owner, only by the addresses served. The RFID tag will be assigned to the customer based on block number and street name, not by individual or property owner.

RFID tags can be used in the following ways:

- To generate an accurate and comprehensive participation rate. Participation will be gauged at the day and route level, not by the individual level.
- To provide additional education and outreach to routes, which will provide information about the benefits of recycling and provide additional contact information if residents have questions. Recycling is not mandatory in the City and residents are encouraged to recycle based on the economic and environmental benefits. By targeting outreach efforts, the City can limit funding for postage and printing.
- To potentially take advantage of recycling rewards programs, such as RecycleBank (www.recyclebank.com).

The RFID tags will **not**:

- Track how much an individual recycles
- Track what you recycle
- Track who you are

Will you fine or report me for not recycling?

The City's residential curbside recycling program is voluntary. Residents will not be fined for not participating in the program.

What do I do with my old recycling container?

Keep your yellow bin and consider reusing it for one of the following purposes:

- Use it as an in-home recycling container.
- Use it for recycling extra material that does not fit in your cart.
- Donate it to a local school as a classroom recycling container.
- Repurpose it as a storage container for gardening, firewood, sweaters, old toys, etc.
- Recycle it by placing your old bin in your new recycling cart!

What should I do with my recycling container if I move?

The carts are property of the City and are to remain with the property when residents move.

Can I use the new recycling cart for trash?

The new recycling container is for recycling only. If a resident places trash in the recycling container it will not be collected. Trash should be emptied into the trash bin for weekly collection.